



# Change harvesting pattern or reduce harvesting speed

## What to do:

Setting ducks and pheasants are lost each year because they won't leave the nest to avoid operating harvesters. Harvest in strips as you move across the field; this allows setting birds to flush away from the harvesting equipment. Avoid beginning at the perimeter and harvesting in a circle, toward the center; this often squeezes the birds into a smaller and smaller space as they attempt to avoid the harvester. Setting birds often don't have time to avoid the new faster, front-bladed harvesters. Some Central Valley farmers who want higher nesting success have solved this problem by driving at reduced speeds in areas where they have observed nesting activity or setting hens. Farmers who are driving older model tractors can consider using their time-honed talent for adapting equipment and devise a simple, front-mounted scare device (flush bar) to help frighten birds off the nest.

Some Central Valley farmers who are interested in saving eggs abandoned during harvesting or mowing have applied for and received an "egg salvage" permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This allows them to pick up abandoned eggs, incubate them — and eventually release the offspring. If you plan on transporting eggs to a licensed salvage location, call your local Fish and Game warden before you begin harvesting to discuss your plans.

## Benefits:

- Reduces the chances of killing ducks and pheasants during the harvest.
- Allows surviving birds a second chance to nest and produce offspring successfully.
- Allows interested farmers to save eggs and raise the offspring by becoming licensed with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or by transporting the eggs to a local salvage location.

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*During the harvest setting ducks and pheasants are lost because they don't have time to avoid working equipment. A simple front-mounted scare device, such as this homemade flush bar, can help frighten birds off of the nest.*



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